

“I’m invoking the front office.”⁶⁹¹ “Ickes is the guy that I deal with.”⁶⁹² Babbitt pointed out that although Ickes is most often thought of in connection with his political responsibilities, he was a Deputy Chief of Staff at the White House, and “he had real line responsibilities. One of them was the Department of the Interior.”⁶⁹³

Babbitt said his letter to McCain was drafted by others with input from him, and that he read and signed the letter. Babbitt stated that probably the letter was presented to him in draft form, he made some changes, the letter was redrafted and he signed it. In referring to the sentence “I must regretfully dispute Mr. Eckstein’s assertion that I told him that Mr. Ickes instructed me to issue a decision without delay,” Babbitt said that the wording of the sentence “doesn’t sound like my language;” but “I think it’s accurate and I agree with it.”⁶⁹⁴ Babbitt said the point of the letter was to answer McCain’s question whether Ickes, the White House or the DNC had contacted Babbitt on the Hudson matter. Babbitt said “the answer is no.”⁶⁹⁵

Babbitt stated that when he tries to recall his conversation with Eckstein, he is “reaching back two and a half years.”⁶⁹⁶ He is “being asked to recollect based on someone else’s

⁶⁹¹*Id.*

⁶⁹²*Id.*

⁶⁹³*Id.* Ickes testified that he did not consider himself as having "an oversight function" for the Department of the Interior, and told investigators that he had visited Interior only once during his three years in the White House. *See supra* at 184.

⁶⁹⁴*Id.* at 6.

⁶⁹⁵*Id.*

⁶⁹⁶*Id.*